

The Old Paths

"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." -Jeremiah 6:16

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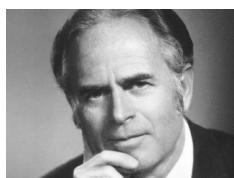
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Why We Don't Have Revival

We've said that prayer changes things. No! Prayer doesn't change things. Prayer changes people and they change things....

Page 1

The Hour of Desperation!



We need revival...
Page 2

Life In The Spirit

The very life of Christ has been put within us, and is moving within us-a perfect life. May the Lord help us to see the power of this life. The years of a man's life are...

Page 3

The Joy of Obedience



Let yourself go in wholehearted devotion to the Lord...

Page 4

Repentance Necessary

The Church can do many things after she has repented but nothing until first she repents, we are propagating today a degenerate brand of Christianity...

Page 5

Stirring Quotes



Be challenged and changed by these stirring quotes
Page 6

Why We Don't Have Revival



In an old town in Ireland they'll show you with reverence a place where four young men met night after night after night praying for revival. In Wales, there's a place in the hills where three or four young men only 18 or 19 years old met and prayed night after night. They wouldn't let God go; they would not take no for an answer. As far as humanly possible they prayed a revival into birth. If you're thinking of revival at your church without any inconvenience, forget it. Revival costs a lot.

I can give you one simple reason why we don't have revival in America. Because we're content to live without it. We're not seeking God - we're seeking miracles, we're seeking big crusades, we're seek-

ing blessings. In Numbers 11, Moses said to God, "You're asking me to carry a burden I can't handle. Do something or kill me!" Do you love America enough to say, "God, send revival or kill me"? Do you think it's time we changed Patrick Henry's prayer from, "Give me liberty or give me death," to "Give me revival or let me die"?

In the 30th chapter of Genesis, Rachael goes to Jacob and throws herself down in despair. She says, "Give me children or else I die." Are you willing to throw yourself down before God to seek the spiritual birth of spiritual children in our country?

People say, "I'm filled with the Holy Spirit." If the coming of the Spirit didn't revolutionize your prayer life, you'd better check on it. I'm not so sure you got what God wanted you to get.

We've said that prayer changes things. No! Prayer doesn't change things. Prayer changes people and they change things. We all want Gabriel to do the job. God says do it yourself - with My sufficiency and My strength.

We need to get like this woman, Hannah. What did she do? She wept, she was grieved, she said she had a complaint, she fasted - and she prayed.

Jesus, the anointed of God, made prayer His custom. Paul, with his background and intellect, depended on prayer because he said he was weak. David, the king, called himself a poor man and cried to the Lord. Hannah prayed for a son and gave birth to a prophet. The prayers of a handful of

young men sparked revival.

Now I say very often - and people don't like it - that God doesn't answer prayer. He answers desperate prayer! Your prayer life denotes how much you depend on your own ability, and how much you really believe in your heart when you sing, "Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling...." The more self-confidence you have, the less you pray. The less self-confidence you have, the more you have to pray.

"In prayer, I must wrestle like Jacob, and pant like David, and hope like Elijah, and be persistent like Bartimeus, and cry with tears like my blessed Lord."
- Alexander Smellie

Leonard Ravenhill (1907-1994). Leonard Ravenhill, born in Leeds, in Yorkshire, England, he was educated at Cliff College in England and sat under the ministry of Samuel Chadwick. He was a student of Church History and an expert in the field of revival. A great friend of A.W. Tozer, he was a prolific writer in his own right and preached till he was well into his later years. Blessed with an exceedingly dry wit and the ability to turn a phrase, Ravenhill was one of the true unsung heroes of the Church in the latter half of the 20th Century.



The Hour of Desperation!

"we need revival urgently--we need revival desperately!"

It is my conviction that we are never going to have revival until God has brought the church of Jesus Christ to the point of desperation. As long as Christians people can trust religious organization, material wealth, popular preaching, shallow evangelistic crusades and promotion drives, there will never be revival. But when confidence in the flesh is smashed, and the church comes to the realization of her desperate wretchedness, blindness and nakedness before God, then and only then will God bread in.

Yes, there must be the point of desperation but there must also be the point of intercession. Oh, that God would bring us to this place of intercession! We cannot think or talk, let alone taste of revival, without intercessory prayer. Indeed, the reason for an unrevived church in the last analysis is the sin of prayerlessness. Certainly there are individuals who are praying for revival, and God is graciously meeting them at the point of their need, but where are the prayer groups, where are the companies of intercessors, where are the churches united in an ago-

nizing that God would rend the heavens and come down and cause the mountains of hindrance and sin and unbelief to flow before His presence? Yes, there is only one thing that will save us in this hour of desperation and that is prayer.

Every day in America a new cult arises. Perhaps one of the most sinister is the New Age movement with its tentacles in most every area of life, especially in corporate life. We need to read the times, but we need to heed the trends in light of all this. There must be a return to anointed expository preaching of the Word of God calling for a divine verdict.

In every period of church history there has been heresy and apostasy, and it's no different today. Men and women will not endure sound doctrine. I've heard men say, 'If I preach like that, what you call expository preaching ... people won't accept it.' So what? 'People will leave me.' So what? Paul said that people will not endure sound doctrine, meaning that some will turn away from biblical preaching.

Whether it be in the personal life, or in the church life, or on the mission field, we need revival--we need revival urgently--we need revival desperately! Revival is ultimately Christ Himself, seen, felt, heard, living, active, moving in and through His body on earth.

Stephen Olford (1918-2004). Dr. Stephen Olford was recognized nationally and internationally for his powerful exposition of Scripture, and his Christ-centered ministry. In recent years he has been viewed as a mentor and model to thousands of preachers, teachers, and pastors in the United States and around the world. Dr. Olford's influence upon thousands of pastors and preachers cannot be measured. He has had a significant role in the lives of many, including his longtime friend, Dr. Billy Graham. He has been called "The Preacher's Preacher".



Life In The Spirit

"The very life of Christ has been put within us..."

Satan is always endeavoring to bring the saints of God into disrepute, bringing against them railing accusations, but the Holy Ghost never comes with condemnation. He always reveals the blood of Christ. He always brings us help. The Lord Jesus referred to Him as the Comforter who would come. He is always on hand to help in the seasons of trial and test. The Holy Ghost is the lifting power of the church of Christ. And Paul tells us that we "are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, . . . written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart." The Holy Ghost begins in the heart, right in the depths of human affections. He brings into the heart the riches of the revelation of Christ, implanting purity and holiness there, so that, out of its depths, praises may well up continually.

The Holy Ghost will make us epistles of Christ, ever telling out that Jesus our Lord is our Redeemer and God has never put away that revelation. And because of the perfect atonement of that slain Lamb, there is salvation, healing and deliverance for all.

Some people think that they have only to be cleansed once, but as we walk in the light the blood of Jesus Christ is ever cleansing.

The very life of Christ has been put within us, and is moving within us—a perfect life. May the Lord help us to see the power of this life. The years of a man's life are threescore and ten, and so in the natural order of things, my life will be finished in seven years, but I have begun a new life that will never end. "From everlasting to everlasting Thou art God." This is the life I have come into, and there is no end to this life. In me is working a power stronger than every other power; Christ, the power of God, formed within me. I can see why we need to be clothed upon from above, for the life that is in me is a thousand times bigger than I am outside.

"We are not sufficient to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God." If you go back, you miss the plan. We leave the old order of things. We can never have confidence in the flesh; we cannot touch that. We are in a new order, a spiritual order. It is a new life of absolute faith in

the sufficiency of our God in everything that pertains to life and godliness. In the life of the Spirit, God undertakes to do what we cannot do. We are carried along by Him, He clothes us, and He gives us utterance.

Smith Wigglesworth (1859-1949). Smith Wigglesworth was without doubt one of the most anointed men of God that has lived in recent times. He was known as the Apostle of Faith. He was a traveling pentecostal minister and faith healer and was one of the early figures in the history of pentecostalism. His dramatic style of preaching and healing in meetings drew big crowds of people. Many lives were touched for eternity. Smith Wigglesworth himself died in 1946 at the ripe old age of 87, a flame of God to the very end. May he be an example to us all.



The Joy of Obedience

"Let yourself go in wholehearted devotion to the Lord."

Long ago I came across this sentence: "Perfect obedience would be perfect happiness, if only we had perfect confidence in the power we were obeying." I remember being struck with the saying as the means of a possible, though undreamed of, way of happiness. I thought of that saying often, even when full of inner rebellion. It gave me the vision of a rest and yet a vision of a possible development that would soothe and at the same time satisfy all my yearnings. Need I say that this rest has now been revealed to me, not as a vision, but as a reality. I have seen the Lord Jesus as the way to perfect rest when we yield to Him and take His yoke upon us.

Dear hesitating soul, you are missing such joy! The Master has revealed Himself to you and is calling for your complete surrender. Yet, you withdraw and hesitate. You are partially willing, and you think it is fit and proper that you should feel thus. But a complete surrender, without any reserve, seems to you to be too much. You are afraid of it. You think it involves too much and is too great a risk.

Dear Christian, this very difference between you is your privilege, though you do not yet know it. Your Lord says, "He that hath My commandments) and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father. and I will love him, and will manifest myself to Him." You have His commandments. Those you envy do not have them. You know the mind of your Lord about many things. Those walking in darkness do not. Is this not a privilege? Should you regret that your soul is in such close relationship with your Master that He is able to tell you things which those less close may not know?

It is altogether wonderful. It will not matter to you if men hate you and separate themselves from you. It will not matter to you if men condemn you. If this happens for His sake, Scripture says your reward is great in heaven for if you are a partaker of His suffering, you will also be a partaker of His glory. Your love and devotion are His precious reward for all He has done for you. It is unspeakably sweet to Him. Do not be afraid, then, to let

yourself go in wholehearted devotion to the Lord. Others may not approve, but He will. That is enough. Do not let a day or an hour go by in which you are not consciously doing His will and following Him completely.

Hannah Whitall Smith (1832-1911), is best known for her classic, *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*, first published in 1875. This perennially popular book has been effective for many as an introduction to the realm of the growth truths--although not from a clear doctrinal standpoint. Another book, *The God of All Comfort*, has been very helpful to many undergoing trials. She was raised in the Society of Friends (Quakerism), and for some time was associated with the Plymouth Brethren. She was one of the most popular holiness advocates in her day primarily through her publications.



Repentance Necessary

“Unless the church repents, and has a complete...”

The Church can do many things after she has repented but nothing until first she repents, we are propagating today a degenerate brand of Christianity. Unless the church repents, and has a complete overhauling instead of a tune-up job, our evangelistic and missionary drives may add for the most part only a multitude of proselytes who are both unsaved pagans and unregenerated church members. Like produces like. Worldly churches produce more worldly church members. Churches weak or unsound in doctrine produce more of the same variety. Churches that operate in the energy of the flesh instead of by the Holy Spirit produce more of the same kind. We must improve the present quality of our churches, for converts tend to take on the qualities of the people who convert them...

If God ever visits us again in real revival, there will be many red faces as churchmen and religious leaders blush and hang their heads in shame for the silly and stupid ways in which we have tried to promote the work of God in the energy of the flesh by the help of the world. Drama will be unnecessary. We

may not even need great preachers! All this will vanish in the blinding light of the holiness of God, and no flesh will glory in His presence...

There is no greater hindrance to revival than a comfortable pastor settled and satisfied, coasting along until he reaches retirement, who does not want his flock disturbed or the status quo upset. He has long since lost his burden and concern for a mighty upheaval of God among the resters at ease in Zion. He resents any intrusion into the complacency of a sleeping church, and interprets the prophet's call to repentance as an indictment of his own preaching. Sometimes his own people may get under conviction, and put him to shame by a concern he does not seem to feel. This makes it exceedingly difficult for any revivalist calling Christians to repentance, but what a delight when pastor and prophet stand together!

Most pastors understand that the traveling prophet can say things the pastor cannot say—that he fills a different role and follows an utterly different pattern. Breaking up the ground is never a pleasant,

comfortable business, and churches sometimes resent the plow of plain preaching. Blessed is the pastor who knows this, and stands behind the lonely prophet who calls the church to repentance...

Vance Havner (1901-1986). In describing his own ministry, Mr. Havner claims that he is not a preacher, nor an evangelist, nor a teacher nor an orator, nor a prophet. He claims that he is simply an “exhorter.” This probably is an apt description of Vance Havner, whose sharp, incisive wit and unyielding proclamation of God's message to all men. His message is primarily to the church, Bible-centered exhortation to faith and obedience, and is marked by practical admonition. His emphasis is on revival among Christians which was one of the earmarks of this man's ministry before God.

Del Fehsenfeld Jr.



"True revival is that divine moment when God bursts upon the scene and displays his glory."

"Revival awakens in our hearts an increased awareness of the presence of God, a new love for God, a new hatred for sin, and a hunger for His Word."

"God wants to avert judgment, and He's simply looking for one person who will pay the price in prayer and in faith and in commitment, whatever it takes, to get a hold of God and not let loose."

"Revival is the moving of God's Spirit, through the power of His Word, to the hearts of His children, that resurrects to new life those areas which have been lying stagnant, dormant, or out of balance, and that results in new love and obedience to Jesus Christ."

"Nothing short of an outpouring of God's Spirit will revitalize and empower an impotent and anemic church to display once again His glory to a lost world."

"If revival depended on you -- your prayers, your faith, your obedience -- would your church ever experience revival?"

Oswald J. Smith



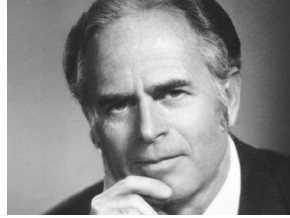
"In the Irish Revival of 1859, people became so weak that they could not get back to their homes. Men and women would fall by the wayside and would be found hours later pleading with God to save their souls. They felt that they were slipping into hell and that nothing else in life mattered but to get right with God... To them eternity meant everything. Nothing else was of any consequence. They felt that if God did not have mercy on them and save them, they were doomed for all time to come."

"We talk of the second coming, half of the world has never heard of the first."

"About the middle of the sermon a man cried out. I fell to prayer, nor could we preach any more for cries and tears all over the chapel."

"A revival always includes conviction of sin on the part of the church. Back-slidden professors cannot wake up and begin right away in the service of God without deep searchings of heart. The fountains of sin need to be broken up."

Stephen Olford



"Whether it be in the personal life, or in the church life, or on the mission field, we need revival--we need revival urgently--we need revival desperately!"

"Revival is the manifestation of the glory, power, and blessing of the Son of God among His people."

"Revival is ultimately Christ Himself, seen, felt, heard, living, active, moving in and through His body on earth."

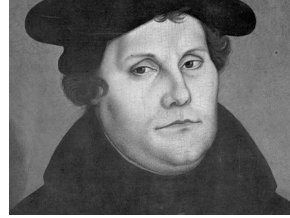
"Revival is not some emotion or worked-up excitement; it is rather an invasion from heaven which brings to man a conscious awareness of God."

"Will you pray 'Revive me!' and then open your being to the Spirit of Revival? Do not rest until you have been restored to the fullness of the blessing that God is waiting to pour out in your life!"

"Revival is that strange and sovereign work of God in which He visits His own people--restoring, reanimating, and releasing them into the fullness of His blessing."

"When God breaks into a life or a community, nothing else matters save the person of Jesus, the glory of Jesus, the name of Jesus."

Martin Luther



"None can believe how powerful prayer is, and what it is able to effect, but those who have learned it by experience. It is a great matter when in extreme need to take hold on prayer. I know whenever I have prayed earnestly that I have been amply heard, and have obtained more than I prayed for. God indeed sometimes delayed, but at last He came."

"The only saving faith is that which casts itself on God for life or death."

All who call on God in true faith, earnestly from the heart, will certainly be heard, and will receive what they have asked and desired.

I am afraid that the schools will prove the very gates of hell, unless they diligently labor in explaining the Holy Scriptures and engraving them in the heart of the youth.

Prayer is a strong wall and fortress of the church; it is a goodly Christian weapon.

I am more afraid of my own heart than of the pope and all his cardinals. I have within me the great pope, self.

Watchman Nee



"Victory is the normal experience of a Christian; defeat should be the abnormal experience."

"Christ is the Son of God. He died to atone for men's sin, and after three days rose again. This is the most important fact in the universe. I die believing in Christ." Watchman Nee - Note found under his pillow, in prison, at his death.

"The Blood deals with what we have done, whereas the Cross deals with what we are. The Blood disposes of our sins, while the Cross strikes at the root of our capacity for sin."

"How we need the Lord to enlighten our eyes that we may comprehend afresh the importance of prayer and know anew its value. Furthermore, we must recognize that had Satan not deceived us we would not be neglecting prayer so much. We should therefore watch and discover therein all the various wiles of Satan. We will not allow him to delude us any more in relaxing in prayer."

"The sight of any trouble strikes terror into the heart of those who do not have faith, but those who trust Him say, 'Here comes my food!'"

"We're preaching an acceptable Gospel today, making it as painless as we can. And all we do is give people a shot to put them to sleep so they get to hell quicker. We need some hellfire preaching on repentance." - Leonard Ravenhill